

## Missionary

### THE CRAVING OF KOREANS.

The craving of Korean converts and inquirers for more knowledge of the wonderful book that we cherish as our Bible, is most impressive.

Dr. Underwood, of the Northern Presbyterian mission, gives a suggestion of the native's hunger for Gospel truth in this statement:

The native Korean convert is zealous to study his Bible. Bibles are not given away in Korea, nor sold for a small fraction of their cost, but fetch the full cost of their production. Yet in spite of the Korean poverty so great is the demand that last year when the Bible committee had ordered a new edition of 20,000 copies of the New Testament, the whole edition was sold before a word had been printed. Koreans will endure great privation and travel for days to attend a Bible class, and these classes, varying according to locality from two hundred and fifty to eleven hundred and eighty enrolled members, will continue from ten to fourteen days. Then the attendants on these larger classes in their turn hold smaller classes, so that one station in the north reports during the past year as many as one hundred and ninety-two of these smaller classes, with an enrollment that exceeded ten thousand.

### THE SIEGE OF THE MISSIONARIES.

#### In Peking—In the Year 1900.

Of all the events of the century just closed, none have revealed the watchfulness of God over his people more fully than did the occurrences of the siege which was undergone by the ambassadors of European powers and by the Christian missionaries in Peking in the year 1900. We have just come across some notes (made some years ago) which bring these scenes freshly to mind.

We all know how the minds of the Chinese, and especially of their leaders, were inflamed, during the nineties, by the efforts of the powers of Europe to appropriate parts of the Chinese Empire. The resentment was but natural. To this was added the interferences by Roman Catholic priests in China with the administration of justice in her civil courts. These things furnished the occasion of which the Boxers took hold in inciting their followers to outrage.

Our concern at this time is with the protection of the missionaries in Peking during that crisis. It was a beautiful exhibition of God's care.

The increasing hostility of the Boxers to all that was foreign had been no secret in China. As early as September, 1899, threats were frequent. By the month of May, 1900, the air became full of rumors of violence. By about the last of day May the admirals in charge of the fleet at Tien Tsin, forty miles south of Peking, dispatched a body of four hundred marines by rail to that city. The troops went ahead, leaving their artillery to follow the next day. Before the next morning dawned, the Boxers tore up the railroad to Peking and the artillery never reached the soldiers.

On the eighth of June all the missionaries who lived in Peking left their homes and repaired to the compound of the Methodist Mission, which was but a quarter of a mile from the British legation. At that time the ambassadors were not ready to invite the missionaries to come within the legation walls. If they had not (later) done so every life in the legation would have been sacrificed.

During the next ten days the superstitions of the Chinese were used by Providence for the safety of the missionaries. At the Methodist compound a soldier was placed in the church steeple to watch. But the Boxers believed that the man in that steeple was "a mysterious stranger who stood guard over it with a powerful charm," with which the Chinaman could never successfully cope. Thus for days were these Christians protected by the superstition. A week later, all the Christian chapels in Peking were burned and an effort was made to capture the Methodist compound.

Some of the exigencies were trying. One day during this week, at sunset, a knock was heard at the gate. It was a Christian mother begging for admittance. In her arms was an infant covered with smallpox eruptions. Could she be admitted to a building crowded with refugees? Christian love demanded it and she was received.

The next day, June 19, the Empress ordered all foreigners to leave Peking. Of course compliance meant death by the wayside. The American ambassador (believing that they would be protected) counselled that they should attempt the journey to Tien Tsin. But they refused. Their refusal was used by God as the one great instrumentality in protecting the ambassadors in the legation. For when they refused, the legations invited them within their walls and it was the missionaries who constructed the barriers of defence and thus saved the lives of the ambassadors.

But how could this band of missionaries and of natives get safely from the Methodist compound to the legation? Between the two places were a thousand Chinese soldiers full of hatred and bitterness. Early on that day the German ambassador, Baron Kettelin, had been massacred; how could they hope for a safe passage? But under the protection of prayer—with no earthly helper—the whole company passed under the gaze of the soldiers and not one of them suffered harm.

But how could all these missionaries and all these Chinese be provided with quarters? Reply: On that day Prince Su, whose house was adjacent to the legation, moved out. He left room for hundreds and he left cloth which made forty thousand sandbags with which to protect the besieged ones.

How feed such a multitude? For there were 473 marines and seven hundred native Christians; and the families of the missionaries and the ambassadors were four hundred more. But when Prince Su moved out, also a wholesale rice dealer moved away, leaving a large store of rice within the walls, and six mules to grind the rice.

But how about defences? The superstition of the Chinese again came to their defence. Under the popular imagination that the air is ever full of spirits who